1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

special rare ceremonial occasions, because of the poverty of the food supply. The prevalence of such large camps among the Tiwi supports our general thesis that their native food supply was, for Australia, unusually plentiful, and that, in this sense, the Tiwi were a "rich" Australian tribe.

When camped together thus, the various households kept their distance, with the main fires and shelters of each separated by some twenty or thirty yards from the others, and during the day when everybody (except the old men) was out food collecting, the camps were almost deserted. When the food gatherers returned in twos and threes in the late afternoon, each household would cook and eat at its own fires as a unit, but if they wished, members of the smaller households, in which food returns for the day were probably smaller per capita than those of the bigger households, would "drop in during supper" upon the latter and supplement their own slender meal. Such hospitality was always extended on an individual basis; some member of the bigger household, usually a senior wife, would offer to one of the visitors a piece of meat or a dish of *kuroka* and if rebuked by her husband she would justify her act by mentioning her own kin relationship to the visitor, as if to stress that the kindness was her own individual gesture and did not commit the whole household to friendliness. Heads of large households were, however, generally very permissive if such handouts were made by senior females of their household to women or children of other households; it was handouts to adult male outsiders, especially young male outsiders, that were likely to provoke snarls or reprimands from the old man. This was in line with the general hostility of all old men to all young unmarried men that ran through all aspects of Tiwi culture.

After darkness fell, such a camp, with three or four households all resting within easy hearing distance of each other, became highly animated with men visiting from fire to fire as the women, who were not encouraged to walk about after dark, gossiped around their own fires. Little productive work could be done after dark, though a few cooking chores and food-preparation activities were performed, and most people went to sleep early unless the shouted conversations from fire to fire earlier in the evening had started an argument. If an argument did arise, the participants might go on abusing each other at long range for hours, with many of the listeners becoming involved and the rest remaining awake to enjoy the row.

Such rows were almost invariably outgrowths of the constant suspicion with which older men regarded younger men. This suspicion was in turn part of the price the Tiwi had to pay for the efficient type of food-production unit that they had evolved. This production unit, to reach maximum economic efficiency, required the vast majority of all females to be concentrated in the households of a very small number of husbands; namely, the very oldest men. As a necessary correlate, men under twenty-eight had no wives at all and very few men under forty had any wife except elderly and physically very unattractive widows. The efficient economic organization thus obviously created a moral and social problem—the problem of how to keep the unmarried young men away from the young women. The old head of the household had a double role:

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

304 In a few instances, a horizontal row of small circular scars was noticed beneath the cicatrices of the chest, extending from the axillar to the sternal-line, on one half of the body only. They appeared to have been burned into the skin by the heated end of a fire-stick[1] (*vide* Fig. 2, A).

Circumcision not practised.

304 101 171 681 Circumcision is not, as elsewhere in Australia, one of the attendant mutilations during the ceremonies of initiation, at the age of puberty. No cases were noted either on Bathurst or Melville Island. In this respect the Islanders resemble the fast disappearing Larrekiyas of the Port Darwin district and certain other tribes of Cape York and the adjoining islands.[2]

302 516 The pubic hairs are removed by "pulling them out" with the hand in the same way as the upper lip is cleared of its growth. While standing in conversation, the natives have acquired a peculiar habit of pushing the penis back between the thighs and keeping it from view by crossing one leg over the other.

Habitations.

342 The islanders build no permanent huts or structures to live under. Apart from the shelters afforded by local or natural conditions, such as overhanging trees, the only form of artificial shelter noticed was prepared from the bark of a tree. A long sheet is cut from the trunk and doubled crosswise at its centre. The two ends are then stuck into the ground at an angle of say forty-five degrees. Similar shelters are found on the north coast and elsewhere on the mainland. In the [101] absence of any more permanent structures, the islanders are, in this respect, not so 372 far advanced as the continental Australian aboriginal. Camp fires are, as usual, much in evidence and kept alight during the whole of the night. Fire-sticks are carried during the day time. Sticks and dry timber, collected to feed the fires, are broken to the required length, not across the knee but over the crown of the head. 513 Small sheets of paper bark (*Melaleuca sp.*) are used as mats to lie on when sleeping or camping.

Personal Wear.

291 302 Both male and female walk about in the nude state. The body is anointed with grease and besmeared, in one or more shades of colour, with ochre. The females carry folded sheets of paper bark or large food-carriers about with them, which, upon the approach of strangers, they hold in front of their person.

[171] It is of interest here to note that Captain Matthew Flinders,[3] as far back as 1803, made a similar observation on the mainland opposite. He saw a girl at Caledon Bay who "wore a small piece of bark, in guise of a fig leaf, which was the sole approximation to clothing seen."

[1] *Vide* also *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 10.
[2] *Cf.* J. MacGillivray, *Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* p. 1[illegible].
[3] *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, London, 1814, vol. ii, p. 212.

12:Goodale E-5 (1954) 1957 O120 Tiwi O120

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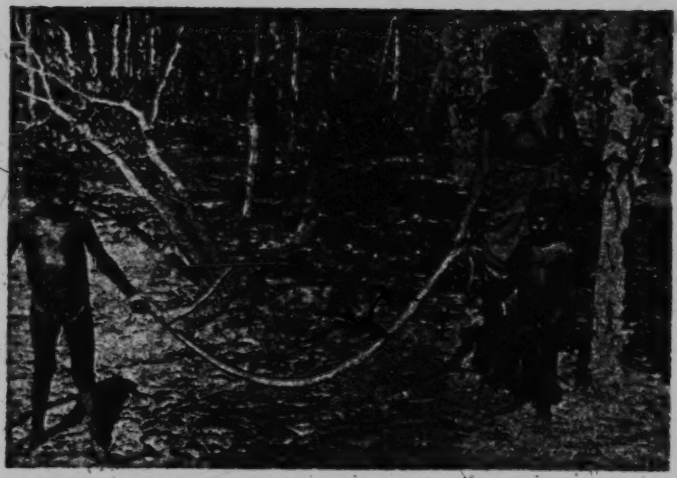

Fig. 20. Althea and Crissy-boy showing me the large snake which Filicy had killed

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cooked, with that delicious charcoal-broiled flavor so much sought after in our more elite dining establishments or in our backyards.

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Just as we had started our feast the other group arrived and soon had their fire started. Although no overt comparison of each other's catch was made, it was quite obvious that their hunt had been more successful. Besides the half dozen possums and two goannas, they brought over to show us an extremely large water snake about ten or twelve feet long. Shortly, Filicy again came over and presented us with one of their possums. After this tremendous feast, everyone stretched out and went to sleep, rousing only in time to arrive back at Minanapi in time to meet the geese. All the way back in the canoe, Crissy-boy played with two hairless baby possums, creating quite an uproar as he put them in everyone's hair where they clung with their tiny feet. They died before we reached the shore and were thrown into the water. Althea was

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